

CLAIMS

Having thus described our invention, what we claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is as follows:

- 1 1. A computer system for one or more buyers and one or more sellers to trade
2 one or more products and/or services by using one or more RFQ (Request for
3 Quotation) processes over one or more computer networks, the system
4 comprising:
 - 5 one or more central processing units (CPUs), one or more memories,
6 and one or more network interfaces to one or more networks;
7 an RFQ creation process that enables one or more buyers to create one or
8 more RFQs with one or more attribute values of preference and one or more
9 business conditions of preference;
10 an RFQ submission process that enables one or more buyers to submit
11 one or more RFQs with one or more attribute values of preference and one or
12 more business conditions of preference to one or more electronic
13 marketplaces;
14 an RFQ receiving process that enables one or more electronic
15 marketplaces to receive one or more RFQs submitted by one or more buyers;
16 an RFQ storage process that enables one or more electronic
17 marketplaces to store one or more RFQs submitted by one or more buyers in
18 one or more database systems;
19 an RFQ posting process that enables one or more electronic
20 marketplaces to post one or more RFQs received from one or more buyers and
21 to invite one or more sell bids from one or more potential sellers of one or
22 more products and/or services specified in the RFQs;
23 a sell bid creation process that enables one or more sellers to create
24 one or more sell bids with one or more attribute values;

25 a sell bid submission process that enables one or more sellers to submit
26 one or more sell bids with one or more attribute values to one or more
27 electronic marketplaces;

28 a sell bid receiving process that enables one or more electronic
29 marketplaces to receive one or more sell bids submitted by one or more sellers
30 on one or more RFQs posted on the electronic marketplaces;

31 a sell bid storage process that enables one or more electronic
32 marketplaces to store one or more sell bids submitted by one or more sellers in
33 one or more database systems;

34 a multi-attribute matching process that enables one or more electronic
35 marketplaces to match between one or more RFQs and one or more sell bids
36 stored in one or more database systems;

37 a sell bid presentation process that enables one or more electronic
38 marketplaces to present one or more sell bids that satisfy the attribute values
39 of preference and business conditions of preference of one or more RFQs to
40 the buyers who submitted the RFQs to one or more electronic marketplace;

41 a sell bid evaluation process that enables one or more buyers to view
42 and evaluate one or more sell bids that satisfy the attribute value of preference
43 and business conditions of preference of one or more RFQs and select one or
44 more sell bids as winning bids;

45 a communication process that enables one or more buyers and sellers
46 to communicate with one another to provide more information about one or
47 more RFQs and one or more sell bids and further to negotiate on one or more
48 deals; and

49 a transaction completion process that enables one or more buyers who
50 select one or more sell bids as winning bids to purchase one or more products
51 and/or services specified in the sell bids.

1 2. A system, as in claim 1, where the RFQ comprises an RFQ identifier, a
2 buyer identifier, a product/service identifier, one or more product/service
3 category names, one or more product/service names, one or more
4 product/service attribute values of preference, one or more product/service
5 attribute importance indicators, a sell bid submission deadline, a sell bid
6 evaluation deadline, one or more bidding rules, one or more sell bid clearing
7 rules, and one or more business conditions of preference.

1 3. A system, as in claim 2, where the product/service attribute importance
2 indicator comprises any one of two or more levels that indicate the degree of
3 importance of a particular attribute value in a particular RFQ.

1 4. A system, as in claim 1, where the electronic marketplace is a Web site that
2 allows one or more buyers and one or more sellers to make one or more trades
3 of one or more products and/or services by using one or more trading
4 mechanisms including the RFQ process.

1 5. A system, as in claim 1, where the sell bid is any one of the followings:
2 submitted sell bid, tentative sell bid, and historical sell bid.

1 6. A system, as in claim 5, where the submitted sell bid comprises a bid
2 identifier, a bid type, a target bid identifier, a seller identifier, a electronic
3 marketplace identifier, a product/service identifier, one or more
4 product/service category names, one or more product/service names, one or
5 more product/service attribute values, one or more bid attributes, and a
6 submission time.

1 7. A system, as in claim 6, where the product/service attribute values includes
2 one or more values of price, quantity, material quality, product quality ratings,

3 merchant reputation, warranty, support, delivery time, and delivery cost.

1 8. A system, as in claim 5, where the tentative sell bid comprises a bid
2 identifier, a bid type, a seller identifier, a electronic marketplace identifier, a
3 product/service identifier, one or more product/service category names, one or
4 more product/service names, one or more product/service attribute values, one
5 or more bid attributes, and a valid time.

1 9. A system, as in claim 5, where the historical sell bid comprises a bid
2 identifier, a bid type, a seller identifier, a electronic marketplace identifier, a
3 product/service identifier, one or more attribute values, one or more bid
4 attributes, a submission time, a valid time, and a bid result.

1 10. A system, as in claim 1, where the sell bids are selected from two or more
2 electronic marketplaces, and then aggregated and stored in one or more
3 databases.

1 11. A system, as in claim 10, where the sell bid aggregation system stores one
2 or more sell bids collected from two or more electronic marketplaces.

1 12. A method of doing business over a network comprising the steps of:
2 providing a buyer with one or more RFQ creation processes for
3 creating one or more RFQs with one or more attribute values of preference
4 and one or more business conditions of preference;
5 providing a buyer with one or more RFQ submission processes for
6 submitting one or more RFQs to one or more sell bid aggregation systems
7 which find one or more sell bids that satisfy the attribute values of preference
8 and the business conditions of preference of the submitted RFQs;
9 providing a buyer with one or more communication processes for

10 communicating with one or more sellers of the sell bids found by one or more
11 sell bid aggregation systems to confirm the validity of the bids, find more
12 information on the bids, and/or negotiate on the bids;

13 providing a buyer with one or more sell bid evaluation processes for
14 evaluating one or more sell bids found by one or more sell bid aggregation
15 systems, and selecting one or more sell bids among them as winning bids;
16 providing a buyer with one or more transaction completion processes for
17 completing one or more purchases of one or more products/services given in
18 one or more winning bids;

19 providing a buyer with one or more electronic marketplace selection
20 processes for selecting one or more electronic marketplaces to submit one or
21 more RFQs and receive more sell bids from one or more sellers;

22 providing a buyer with sell bid receiving processes for receiving one or
23 more sell bids from one or more sellers by using one or more electronic
24 marketplaces;

25 providing a buyer with one or more communication processes for
26 communicating with one or more sellers who submit one or more sell to find
27 more information on the bids, and/or negotiate on the bids;

28 providing a buyer with one or more sell bid evaluation processes for
29 evaluating one or more sell bids submitted by one or more sellers, and
30 selecting one or more sell bids among them as winning bids; and

31 providing a buyer with one or more transaction completion processes
32 for completing one or more purchases of one or more products/services given
33 in one or more winning bids.